



## Differences in the Level of Career Aspirations of High School Students with Minangkabau and Chinese Cultural Backgrounds

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**Abstract:** Career aspiration is one of the factors that influence one's career maturity. Career aspirations direct individual behavior to achieve the career that is their hopes or dreams. Career aspirations can help students choose a secondary school that matches the abilities and potentials of the individual. The purpose of this study was to analyze the differences in career aspirations of high school students with Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds. This research uses a comparative descriptive quantitative approach. The population in this study were students of class XI and XII who have Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds at SMA Negeri 1 Padang and SMA Don Bosco Padang. The research sample was 295 students consisting of 173 Minangkabau students (79 male & 94 female) and 122 Chinese students (64 male and 58 female). The instrument used was the Career Aspiration Level Entry List (DITAK). The measuring instrument used is valid and the reliability coefficient of DITAK is 0.86. Based on the results of the study, there are differences in the level of career aspirations of high school students with Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds, where the level of career aspirations of Chinese students is higher than that of Minangkabau students. The implication of the results of this study is as discussion material and input for the school in making guidance and counseling service programs, especially in the field of career development.

**Keywords:** Level of Career Aspirations, Gender, Cultural

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## Introduction

Career development is one aspect of individual development that is very complex because it contains a combination of many factors and is characterized by change, and is an important part of life planning (Winkel, 2010). One of the factors that influence individual career development is career aspirations. Career aspiration is one of the factors that influence career maturity. Individuals must form career aspirations in the context of ability, potential, or capacity, as well as acceptance of the situation and reality around the individual to achieve career maturity. Career aspirations direct individual behavior to achieve the career that is their hopes or dreams. Career aspirations can help students choose a secondary school that suits their abilities and potential. Everyone has an expected standard (aspiration level) in mind when he does a task. Likewise, with students in school, each of them has a level of aspiration in mind when he does an assignment.

Career aspiration is a complex process, influenced by several aspects, including cultural aspects, family social context, and society (Ferry, 2006). Culture is a complex whole consisting of knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, norms, customs, and other capabilities, as well as any habits that a human being acquires as a member of society (Tylor in Berry, Poortinga, Seegal, & Lecturer, 1992). Some of these cultural aspects will influence a person's behavior through a process of interaction that takes place continuously in his life. In other words, culture can influence a person's behavior through the learning process. Triandis (1994) concluded that culture as an aspect of life is instilled (giving) from generation to generation. This aspect of life is preserved in people's lives and instilled by parents in their children, as something important in their lives. Culture is played as the source of human civilization that lasts from one era to the next.

One of the small social institutions that give influence children in making career choices in the family. In the family, parents instill cultural values in children and other family members such as religion, belief, art, morals, norms, and customs. At that time, children begin to learn to understand themselves, understand others, establish more intense social contacts, hone their intellect, and stimulate their emotions. Therefore, the atmosphere in the family greatly affects the development of children's personality, intellectuality, self-concept, and subsequently also affects the process of choosing a career. A warm family atmosphere will make a child feel safe and welcome. This condition will lead to the parenting of parents who are too protective and loving. Furthermore, it can create a self-orientation that leads to yourself or others, then influences certain career fields that the child will enter in the future.

Triandis (1994) revealed that parents instill cultural values in their children (giving) through social interactions that take place in family life, while Berry, Poortinga, Seegal, & Lecturer (1992) state that culture influences children's behavior through cultural inheritance (cultural transmission). A cultural group can pass on behavioral characteristics to the next generation through learning and instructional mechanisms. This cultural inheritance from one generation to another is termed Cavallin-Sforza & Fieldman (in Berry, Poortinga, Seegal, & Dosen, 1992) as vertical transmission because it involves the inheritance of cultural characteristics from parents to children and grandchildren. For example, parents pass on values, skills, beliefs, cultural motives, and so on to their children and grandchildren. Another example: in the Appalachian culture society, the influence of the family on a career choice is stronger than the individual's interest in a career field in determining career choices (Tang and Russ, 2007). Career choice is usually a match between self-understanding and career exploration. As stated by Stoss and Parris (1999), what he wants, what he has, and what he does in his career are three interrelated things. In other words, ideal career choice decisions are based on self-potential and the results of one's career exploration. Career choices that are only thick with cultural influences, not by one's potential such as intelligence, talents, interests, and personality characteristics of a person can cause career problems. On the other hand, a career choice that is considered by one's potential but does not have the support of a cultural environment can lead to social conflicts, which in turn experience obstacles in one's career development.

The research results of Watson, Stead, & De Jager (2005) show that culture significantly affects students' career choices. Correll (2001) also researched culture and career decisions. The results of his research indicate that the gender aspect of a person as a cultural variable influences the career decision he wants. Ozbilgin, Kusku, & Erdogmus (2004) also researched samples of British, Israeli, and Turkish countries. His research found that there were significant differences between the three countries in career choice variables based on gender, ethnicity, and age. Nail Faridah's research (2014) shows that there is a significant positive relationship between career aspirations and vocational maturity in students at SMK Walisongo Gempol Pasuruan. This implies that the higher a student's career aspirations, the higher their level of vocational maturity. Based on the results of the research, opinions, and descriptions above, the researchers concluded that culture can influence a person's career aspirations through a process of cultural transmission, cultural giving by parents to their children and grandchildren, and the cultural influence of the community in which a resident. Culture, especially subjective culture, becomes a reference for someone in perceiving or interpreting an object, whether the object is meaningful or meaningless, useful or not useful for him (Boesch, Kagitcibasi & Nsamenang, in Kim et al., 2000). What is considered good by someone will be "placed" in the system of values he adheres to, including cultural values. This value affects a person in selecting, processing, interpreting, and using information (Triandis, 1994).

Based on the previous description, differences in the cultural values possessed by one community group with other community groups are factors that can explain different levels of aspirations. Likewise with students, as members of society, the difference in cultural values that a student has from other students can

explain the difference in the level of aspirations. For example, the difference in the level of career aspirations between Asian students and American students, between black students and Hispanic students, or in Indonesia between Javanese and Sundanese students, between Buginese and Madurese students, or between Minangkabau students and Chinese students. In this study, the researcher wanted to see the differences in the level of career aspirations of students with Minangkabau cultural backgrounds and Chinese culture. The purpose of this study was to analyze the differences in the level of career aspirations of senior high school students who have Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds. Also, this study aims to examine differences in the level of career aspirations between (1) Minangkabau male and female students, (2) Chinese male and female students, (3) Minangkabau male students, and Chinese male students. , (4) Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students. These two cultures were chosen because these two cultures adhere to different kinship systems. The Minangkabau community adheres to the Matrilineal kinship system while the Chinese people adhere to the Patrilineal kinship system. Thus, the difference between the cultural values of one student and another is thought to cause their career aspirations to differ. The existence of a cultural link with the level of student career aspirations raises the question, "Do male and female students with Minangkabau cultural backgrounds have different career aspirations from male and female students with Chinese cultural backgrounds?".

## Method

This research uses a comparative descriptive quantitative approach. The study population was students of Class XI and XII with Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds at SMA Negeri 1 Padang and SMA Don Bosco Padang. The research sample was 295 students who were selected by using the stratified random sampling technique.

**Table 1. Research Sample Table**

Class	Minangkabau Cultural Background		Chinese Cultural Background	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
XI				
XII	79	94	64	58
Total	173		122	

The measuring instrument used in the study was the Career Aspiration Level Entry List (DITAK) using a Likert scale model developed from theory and weighed by three experts. Thus the measuring instrument used is valid with the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire on the level of career aspirations (DITAK) of 0.86. The data analysis technique used is the t-test. The statistical analysis was performed using a computer program, namely the SPSS program. The criterion for rejection of the null hypothesis is "The null hypothesis is rejected if the significance of t is smaller or equal ( $\leq$ ) to 0.05".

## Results and Discussion

The first hypothesis reads: There are differences in the level of career aspirations between male and female Minangkabau students. The results of data analysis using the t-test technique obtained a value of  $F = 0.369$  with a significance of 0.924. Based on the significance of the F value, it can be said that the level of career aspirations of Minangkabau male and female students is not different (same/homogeneous). The results of the analysis show that the t value of the career aspiration level is -0.96 with a significance of 0.545. Thus the null hypothesis is not rejected (accepted). There is no difference in the career aspirations of Minangkabau male and female students. The level of career aspirations between male and female students in Minangkabau is not different.

The second hypothesis reads: There are differences in the level of career aspirations between Chinese male and female students. The results of data analysis show the value of  $F = 2.788$  with a significance of 0.000. Based on the significance of the F value, it can be said that the career aspirations of Chinese male and

female students are different (not the same / not homogeneous). The results of the analysis show that the  $t$  value of the career aspirations level is 4,825 with a significance of 0,000. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a difference in the level of career aspirations between Chinese male and female students. Chinese male students have a higher average aspiration level than female Chinese students

The third hypothesis states: There are differences in the level of career aspirations of Minangkabau male students and Chinese male students. The results of data analysis showed the value of  $F = 1,283$  with a significance of 0.000. Based on the significance of the  $F$  value, it can be said that the level of career aspirations of Minangkabau male students and Chinese male students is different (not the same / not homogeneous). The results of the analysis show that the  $t$  value of the career aspiration level is 0.259 with a significance of 0.000. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. There are differences in the level of career aspirations between male Minangkabau students and male Chinese students. Chinese male students have a higher average level of career aspirations than male Minangkabau students.

The fourth hypothesis states: There are differences in the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students. The results of the analysis show the value of  $F = 0.003$  with a significance of 0.695. Based on the significance of the  $F$  value, it can be said that the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students is not different (same/homogeneous). The result of the analysis shows that the  $t$  value of the career aspiration level is 0.393 with a significance of 0.695. Thus the null hypothesis is not rejected (accepted). There is no difference in the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students.

#### **Differences in the level of career aspirations of high school students with Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds**

Based on the results of the data analysis, it shows that there are differences in the level of career aspirations of students with Minangkabau cultural backgrounds and students with Chinese cultural backgrounds. Thus the hypothesis of a difference in the level of career aspirations between students with Minangkabau and Chinese cultural backgrounds is rejected. The research findings show that students with a Chinese cultural background have a higher level of career aspirations than students with a Minangkabau cultural background. This finding is under the research hypothesis.

The high level of career aspirations of students with Chinese cultural backgrounds is likely to be closely related to the attitude of the Chinese community towards the world around which their attitude and total commitment to life, if necessary with an extra commitment to make their lives much better than it already is. At worst, they will hope to create conditions where their children or offspring can have good things that they do not have. If likened, if you see a cake in the sky, immediately start calculating how to lower it to the dining table. This attitude towards life made Chinese people very aware of the function of things. Their material atmosphere, their own craft, and skills are sources and tools of well-being. The trick is to find working relationships in things and manipulate them to make a life for both oneself and one's family or social class. Chinese people always think that in every action there must be a goal to be achieved. From birth, the life of a Chinese was directed towards the most important goal. (Bonavia, 1997).

#### **Differences in the Career Aspirations of Senior High School Students who are Male and Female with a Minangkabau Cultural Background**

Based on the results of the study, it shows that there is no difference in the level of career aspirations between male and female students with Minangkabau cultural backgrounds, although the average career aspiration level of Minangkabau female students is slightly higher than that of male Minangkabau students. This finding contradicts the research hypothesis.

The higher level of career aspirations for Minangkabau female students than male students is related to the roles played by Minangkabau women. In Minangkabau culture which adheres to a matrilineal kinship system, kinship members are taken over through the maternal line, and all kinds of family rights and obligations are only counted through the mother's offspring. Minangkabau women are called *bundo kanduang* and *limpapeh rumah gadang*. *Bundo kanduang* consists of two words, namely *bundo* and *kanduang*. *Bundo* means mother, while *kanduang* means true. Thus *bundo kanduang* means a true mother who has maternal and leadership traits (Penghulu, 1991). The concept of *bundo kanduang* defines the role of women in wider kinship relationships (including village and state). *Bundo Kanduang* prioritizes policies, considerations, and harmony in society. That role lies in the hands of the wise and wise woman (mother). In addition, girls and women in Minangkabau are called *limpapeh rumah nan gadang*, which is a place for all

members of the rumah gadang to congregate. Limpapeh rumah nan gadang also means the hope of all family members or residents of the nan gadang house. The existence of such a role also encourages women in Minangkabau to become skilled and careful women in educating children and controlling inheritance. In short, the welfare and harmony of all family members depends on the wisdom of women as bundo kanduang and limpapeh rumah nan gadang (Safwan & Kutoyo, 1980/1981).

### **The Difference in Career Aspirations Levels of Male and Female Senior High School Students with Chinese Cultural Background**

Based on the results of data analysis, it shows that there are differences in the career aspirations of male and female students with Chinese cultural backgrounds. Thus the hypothesis that there is a difference in the level of career aspirations between male and female students with Minangkabau cultural backgrounds is rejected. The research findings reveal that there are differences in the level of career aspirations between male and female students with Chinese cultural backgrounds. Chinese male students have higher career aspirations than female students. This finding is under the research hypothesis

The higher level of career aspirations of male Chinese students than female Chinese students is related to the roles played by Chinese men. The Chinese are known as a group that adheres to the patrilineal kinship system, or according to the paternal lineage. The role of women in Chinese society is under the domination of men (Fung Yu Lan, 1990). In Chinese society, there are two basic principles of cosmology, namely Yin and Yang. Yin – Yang are two complementary principles. Yin is a negative element such as water, cold, wet, passive, dark, moon, and female, while Yang is a positive elements such as fire, heat, dry, active, bright, sunny, and is male. The sky has more Yang elements and the earth has more Yin elements. Yang is the creative force that gives motion and life to something, while Yin is the material or substance that is given the ability to move and live. That which is giving and multiplying, while Yin is receiving and saving. Yang moves on while Yin remains silent (Riniwaty, 2018).

The existing order implies that the position of women in the human life system must be lower and lower like the earth. The inferior position of women is seen as part of natural law. Yin (earth) is controlled by Yang (sky). The virtue of a woman is submissive and weak, passive and silent, just like the earth. This is different from men who have to be active and strong, full of initiatives like heaven or heaven. However, the superior position of men is not complete without the presence of women as the opposite sex who complement each other. In the human life system, women are only seen in the context of the family, while men are seen in the wider socio-political relationship, outside the household. This shows that the rights held by men are greater than those owned by women.

### **Differences in Career Aspirations Levels of Male High School Students with Minangkabau Cultural Background and Chinese Culture**

The research findings show that there is a difference in the level of career aspirations between male Minangkabau male students and Chinese male students, where the level of career aspirations of male Chinese students is slightly higher than that of male Minangkabau students. The research findings are under the research hypothesis.

From a cultural perspective, especially the kinship system, Chinese men have a higher level of career aspirations than Minangkabau men, because Chinese men have a more fortunate fortune than less fortunate men in Minangkabau. The matrilineal social system, in which the lineage is drawn from the mother's side and the inheritance of the daughter, causes Minangkabau youth to seem as if they are not powerful in the clan and are not given enough attention in their family environment. Although in the present there is a mixture of life together between Minangkabau boys and girls, this principle is still practiced. This principle is followed and consciously embraced by all Minangkabau residents, both those who live in the Rumah gadang and modern houses, both in the Minang realm and abroad (Amir, 2001). In Chinese society, there is a patrilineal kinship system. In the family, boys are like the heavens and girls are like the earth. In Chinese culture, several attributes are important for children, namely relationship with family, academic achievement, behaving well, and having good relationships with others. Besides, students of Chinese descent have activities that support future career planning, there is a strong concern from the family about careers, and in Chinese families there is a strong network about the economy, business traditions in the family from generation to generation, making Chinese students already prepared in preparation. plan a career in the future (Indah Konaco, 2011). This is supported by Guan's results (in Huang & Larry, 2004) which state that 70% of Chinese parents focus more on children's academic achievement. In line with further research which

states that to improve academic achievement 83% of Chinese parents provide different ways of educating their children, namely by hiring tutors or guiding children while they are studying.

### **Differences in Career Aspirations Levels of Senior High School Students of Gender Women with Minangkabau Cultural Background and Chinese Culture**

The results of the data analysis showed that there was no difference in the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students, although the average career aspiration level for Chinese women was slightly higher than that of Minangkabau female students. This finding contradicts the research hypothesis. In other words, the structure of the matrilineal society which gives a high position to Minangkabau female students does not have a significant effect on Minangkabau female students to set a higher level of career aspirations than Chinese female students.

The rejection of the hypothesis above seems to be related not only to cultural values but to the women's emancipation movement. There is no difference in the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau and Chinese female students, related to social changes in society. The total reforms that have hit public and state life today have led to fundamental changes in aspects of political life, economy, law, and cultural development (Tilaar, 2000). In other words, the crisis in Indonesian society which began with the financial and economic crisis in 1997 has given birth to a multi-dimensional crisis, and a multi-dimensional crisis has an impact on social change.

Some sociologists believe that technological developments are the main source of social change. Specifically, social change in Indonesia is inseparable from the three forces that change life together with mankind today, namely (1) democratization, (2) advances in science and technology, especially communication and information technology, and (3) globalization (Tilaar, 2002). Tilaar further explained that the flow of globalization does not only change the way of life in the economic field but also changes social, cultural, and political life.

The process of democratization advances in science and technology and globalization has given birth to a world society, including Indonesia as an open society. Besides, the development of big cities as industrial centers has encouraged people to urbanize, which has resulted in many social problems. In line with that, the traditional values of society are destroyed by new values. These changes in value change the forms of human life, including family life (Tilaar, 2002). Therefore, there is no difference in the level of career aspirations between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students.

## **Conclusion**

In general, there are differences in the level of student career aspirations based on gender and culture. This means that gender and culture influence individuals in determining or choosing a career. In particular, Minangkabau female students and male students did not differ in the level of career aspirations, although the average score of the Minangkabau female students' career aspirations level was slightly higher than that of male Minangkabau students. Likewise, the level of career aspirations between Chinese female and male students, male Chinese students had higher career aspirations than Chinese female students, and Chinese male students had higher career aspirations than male Chinese students. Meanwhile, between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students, there was no difference in the level of career aspirations.

In general, there are differences in the level of student career aspirations based on gender and culture. This means that gender and culture influence individuals in determining or choosing a career. In particular, Minangkabau female students and male students did not differ in the level of career aspirations, although the average score of the Minangkabau female students' career aspirations level was slightly higher than that of male Minangkabau students. Likewise, the level of career aspirations between Chinese female and male students, male Chinese students had higher career aspirations than Chinese female students, and Chinese male students had higher career aspirations than male Chinese students. Meanwhile, between Minangkabau female students and Chinese female students, there was no difference in the level of career aspirations.

The absence of differences in the level of aspirations between Minangkabau female and male students, between Minangkabau women and Chinese women, may be related to the openness of education and employment for women, the occurrence of social changes in society, and the era of globalization. In other

words, there are very few cultural factors associated with levels of aspiration. To test it, other researchers are advised to research students from cultural backgrounds other than Minangkabau and Chinese.

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